



OFFICE OF CITY CLERK

COUNCIL MINUTES

May 29, 2008

The City Council of the City of Mesa met in a Study Session in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on May 29, 2008, at 7:31 a.m.

COUNCIL PRESENT

Mayor Keno Hawker
Kyle Jones
Tom Rawles
Scott Somers
Darrell Truitt
Claudia Walters
Mike Whalen

COUNCIL ABSENT

None

OFFICERS PRESENT

Debbie Spinner
Linda Crocker

1. Review items on the agenda for the June 2, 2008 Regular Council meeting.

All of the items on the agenda were reviewed among Council and staff and the following was noted:

Conflicts of interest declared: None

Items removed from the consent agenda: None

Items added to the consent agenda: 13c and h

2. Hear an update, discuss and provide direction on the Pioneer Park Locomotive.

Management Support Administrator Sherry Woodley of the Parks, Recreation and Commercial Facilities Department reported that the Save the Train Committee has exceeded their goal of raising \$15,000 by this date. She said that representatives of the Committee, Jared Smith and Wally Burgess, were present to answer any questions.

In response to a question from Mayor Hawker, Mr. Smith said that the Committee proposes to relocate the restored locomotive to the front of Pioneer Park to coincide with Arizona's Centennial in 2012 and the one hundred year anniversary of the construction of the locomotive.

Ms. Woodley advised that the Parks Foundation would maintain the donations in an escrow account, and she noted that the donation form now includes an option for the donation to be refunded in the event the fundraising effort is unsuccessful.

Mr. Smith said that the Committee is considering implementing the project in a phased approach, and he added that they hope to secure “in-kind” donations that would reduce the amount of money that would have to be raised. He stated that the first phase of the project would be to move the train to the front area of the park because restoration activities are not viable in the present location.

Mayor Hawker expressed concern that the sufficient funds might not be raised for the restoration after the train is relocated.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that the Committee is willing to work with the Council and City staff to establish a plan for the restoration project; that the plan should include performance benchmarks; and that the Committee would report on their progress to the Council every six months or on a quarterly basis.

Councilmember Jones congratulated the Committee on reaching the \$15,000 goal, and he said that the Council would like to receive periodic updates on their progress.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Rawles, Ms. Woodley advised that the Committee received many small donations and one large donation in the amount of \$15,000.

Councilmember Rawles stated the opinion that one large donation is not an indication of broad community support for the project.

Mr. Burgess noted that many individuals have donated smaller amounts to the fund. He said that as a former railroad employee who worked on locomotives, he believes that the locomotive should remain in the community.

Councilmember Rawles also expressed concern that funds spent to relocate the locomotive would be a waste of money if funds for the restoration are not raised. He added that he does not object to providing the Committee with a six-month extension.

Mayor Hawker noted that two members of the Save the Train Committee have requested the opportunity to address the Council.

Max Cox, 3831 East Clovis Avenue, indicated that the Committee would like a two-year extension in which to raise the funds. He stated the opinion that relocating the locomotive to the front of Pioneer Park would generate more public interest in the project and the restoration could be completed in stages.

Linda Abbott, 2123 North Gentry, thanked the Council for allowing the formation of the citizen’s Committee. She stated the opinion that there is substantial public support for their efforts, and she added that the Committee would pursue grants and other available funding sources.

Mayor Hawker suggested that the Committee report their progress to the incoming Council in six months, and he noted that the Councilmembers concurred with that direction.

3. Hear an update, discuss and provide direction on immigration issues.

Government Relations Director Scott Butler reported that staff expects to receive information regarding grant funding for 287(g) training in the near future.

Police Chief George Gascón advised that he has been in contact with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and no funding allocations have been made at this point.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that Congressman Harry Mitchell has provided a letter in support of the City's efforts to secure funding for the training; and that Congressman Flake and Senator Kyle have also indicated their support.

Mayor Hawker noted that the Governor of Arizona recently vetoed a bill that addressed immigration training for police officers.

Chief Gascón explained that Governor Napolitano was concerned regarding the unfunded State liability for the associated labor costs, which could amount to several million dollars. He said that although the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) would pay the costs of the four-week training course in North Carolina for ten officers, the State would have incurred the additional labor costs.

In response to a question from Mayor Hawker, Chief Gascón advised that he did not anticipate that 287(g) training would generate any cost recovery to the City or enable ICE to take custody of illegal individuals more quickly. He stated that the training would facilitate the ability of Mesa officers to identify individuals who are illegal and have committed crimes. Chief Gascón said that individuals with criminal connections who are turned over to ICE and quickly deported often return to the area a short time later to commit additional crimes. He added that it was important that illegal individuals who commit crimes be held accountable before they are deported.

Responding to a request from Mayor Hawker, Mr. Butler said he would update the Council as soon as information is available, and he would try to obtain a list of the cities that have applied for 287(g) training.

Chief Gascón said that the DHS is attempting to develop a national training center in order to meet the increasing demand from many cities for 287(g) training.

Mayor Hawker noted that the Federal government has failed to address the problem of illegal immigration, and he expressed concern that the creation of a national training center would further burden local communities with the responsibility for a Federal problem.

Vice Mayor Walters emphasized the point made by Chief Gascón, which is that criminals who are deported often return in a matter of days to commit additional crimes. She noted that emphasizing the deportation of illegal individuals fails to solve the problem. Vice Mayor Walters suggested that the legislators be requested to initiate Federal legislation that would fully fund the costs of 287(g) training for local officers. She agreed with the concerns expressed by Mayor Hawker that by providing the training, the Federal government would shift additional responsibility for immigration enforcement to local governments. Vice Mayor Walters also expressed concern that the job of a police officer would be complicated by the dual role of being the individual responsible for obtaining information from crime victims and the individual responsible for enforcing immigration laws. She added that illegal immigration is a complex problem without a simple solution. Vice Mayor Walters thanked Chief Gascón and the Police Department for their efforts to address criminal activity, and she thanked Mayor Hawker for continuing to focus attention on the problem of illegal immigration.

Councilmember Rawles commended Chief Gascón for his leadership of the Mesa Police Department and wished him continued success.

4. Acknowledge receipt of minutes of various boards and committees.

- a. Transportation Advisory Board meeting held on December 18, 2007.
- b. Museum and Cultural Advisory Board meeting held March 12, 2008.

It was moved by Councilmember Jones, seconded by Vice Mayor Walters, that receipt of the above-referenced minutes be acknowledged.

Carried unanimously.

5. Hear reports on meetings and/or conferences attended.

Mayor Hawker: Greeted President Bush during a visit to a local manufacturer. Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) meeting.

Vice Mayor Walters: Groundbreaking ceremony for the new Mesa Court building. League of Arizona Cities & Towns Executive Committee meeting.

6. Scheduling of meetings and general information.

Assistant City Manager Debbi Dollar noted that the Farewell Event for the outgoing Mayor and Council would be held this afternoon at the Convention Center beginning at 4:00 p.m.

Ms. Dollar stated that the meeting schedule is as follows:

Monday, June 2, 2008, TBA – Study Session

Monday, June 2, 2008, 5:45 p.m. – Regular Council Meeting

7. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

8. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Study Session adjourned at 8:09 a.m.

KENO HAWKER, MAYOR

ATTEST:

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Study Session of the City Council of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 29th day of May 2008. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

LINDA CROCKER, CITY CLERK

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